

Ecosystem Restoration Subcommittee Meeting
Friday, May 23, 2003
Resources Agency Auditorium
1416 Ninth Street, Sacramento, CA
Meeting Summary

Subcommittee members (or their alternates) and agency liaisons present:

Gary Bobker (TBI)	Perry Herrgesell (CDFG)
Ryan Broddrick (DU)	Darrin Thome (USFWS)
Serge Birk (CVPWA)	Mike Acetuino (NOAA-Fisheries)
Walt Hoyer (MWD)	Tim Ramirez (Resources Agency)
Lisa Holm (CCWD)	Patrick Akers (CDFA)
Todd Manley (NCWA)	Carolyn Yale (EPA)
Lloyd Fryer (KCWA)	Nan Yoder (USBR)
Bernice Sullivan (Friant WUA)	
Marc Christopher (FOTR)	
Ronda Lucas (CFBF)	
Nick DiCroce (California Trout)	
Diana Hershey (Middletown Rancheria)	
Tom Zuckerman (CDWA)	

Introductions and Subcommittee Status

The meeting began with introductions and a subcommittee report. The summary of the previous meeting was reviewed and amended to reflect Carl Werder's timeline and a clarifying statement in the Battle Creek section about possible delays in order to comply with required public review processes for that project.

Report from joint meeting with the Drinking Water Subcommittee

Co-chair Ryan Broddrick provided highlights of the joint Ecosystem Restoration and Drinking Water subcommittees meeting, which he characterized as productive and a good start toward future collaboration. The two major issues addressed dealt with the mercury report and the total organic carbon. The question of correct procedure came up regarding how to address the cross-concerns of subcommittees in the work plans. Eugenia Laycheck informed the subcommittee that BDPAC adopted the recommended process that how subcommittees coordinate joint efforts be left to the discretion of the subcommittees involved in those efforts.

Co-chair Gary Bobker suggested that the program managers ought to look at their respective programs and identify potential cross-program issues and impacts before these issues or impacts become problems. He cited the Executive Science Board as another opportunity to look at how science is used

program-wide, and that the Executive SB ought to look for the synergy and conflicts within the program. Bobker asked that a discussion about the synergy and conflict of cross-program integration be calendared for the next subcommittee meeting. All subcommittee members and ERP and agency staff were asked to develop a list of potential areas of cross-program integration synergy and conflicts and to email those lists to the subcommittee reflector. Bobker will address this at the next BDPAC meeting.

Update on Working Landscapes Subcommittee activities

Co-chair Ryan Broddrick reported that the Working Landscapes Subcommittee adopted their Framework document, which includes recommendations for the investment of the \$20 million allocated in Proposition 50 for projects that assist farmers in integrating agricultural activities with ecosystem restoration. The subcommittee also adopted its work plan and goals, and anticipates that its work plan information will be incorporated into the program plans. The focus of the subcommittee's work plan was on CALFED goals, not just ERP, and in minimizing or mitigating impacts to agricultural land. A revised version of the work plan will be available for the Ecosystem Restoration Subcommittee to review and identify potential impacts. Ronda Lucas emphasized her desire that the ERP incorporate the subcommittee's report into its work plan. Carolyn Yale suggested that the Working Landscapes Subcommittee look at Watershed Program activities as well as ERP as a "treasure trove" of opportunities.

Update on water management activities in the Delta

Ron Ott of California Bay-Delta Authority staff presented an overview of the many projects that are the major drivers in meeting the water quality, ecosystem restoration, levees, and water supply needs in the Delta. A copy of his PowerPoint presentation was handed out, and it also is available through the CBDA website. Ron highlighted information regarding North Delta projects such as the Delta Cross Channel Re-operation, the Through-Delta Facility; adult fish passage and sturgeon fish ladder research at UC Davis; the North Delta Flood Control and Ecosystem Restoration EIS/EIR due out December 2003; In-Delta Storage and modeling Frank's Tract. South Delta projects descriptions include the South Delta Improvement Project; the 8,500 SWP pumping increase and whether or not a new fish facility needed to be built; the fish management studies that are taking place at the Skinner Fish Facility, the Tracy Fish Facility and at some universities and government labs; and the Collection, Handling, Transportation, and Release (CHTR) studies for fish survivability.

Tom Zuckerman asked a question about a Stockton Record article stating that the Tracy Fish Test Facility was "dead" and whether or not the 8,500 cfs was linked to building that facility. Ron said that he did not agree that the fish facility was dead, but that the South Delta Fish Forum was looking at whether a new facility needed to be built and how large it would be. The fish facility is tied to the

ROD commitment regarding 10,300 cfs, but not the 8,500 cfs; for the 8,500 cfs a link needs to be established that there are positive steps being taken to protect fish. Mike Aceituno stated that the CVPIA requires improvements at the existing Tracy Fish Facility and that different screen designs are being tested; there is some thought that the research originally tied to the Tracy Fish Test Facility can now be done without building a new facility as long as the existing facility can be brought up to standard. The other CVPIA condition is that the fish protection tests need to be completed without affecting the normal water operations; building a new fish facility would meet that condition.

Ecosystem Restoration Program Status Report

Dan Castleberry reported that in addition to the Program Plan, which would be discussed later in the meeting, the major staff effort has been in preparing for the administrative transition that will take place at the start of the State fiscal year. The first Authority meeting likely will be in late July or early August, depending upon when the public members are named to the Authority.

Battle Creek update

Rebecca Fris of the CBDA reported that the program is close to selecting a technical review panel to review a revised proposal for the Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project. She outlined the time frame for review of the proposal. In response to a question about the draft EIS/EIR for the project, Rebecca said that a public review draft ought to be available on June 23, 2003. Serge Birk reviewed some of the concerns he has heard about the proposal regarding adaptive management and monitoring and whether or not the draft EIS/EIR will address only the preferred alternative or all alternatives. Rebecca explained that such comments are being incorporated into the revised draft document.

There also was discussion about the need for more transparency regarding the Coleman National Fish Hatchery re-evaluation and PG&E operating costs and project costs. Rebecca noted that a separate review panel meeting this fall would be looking at the relationship between Coleman Fish Hatchery operations and the ability of a restored Battle Creek to support natural runs of salmon and steelhead. She also noted that the agencies that signed the Memorandum of Understanding with PG&E concerning the Battle Creek project are considering how to address the larger issue of how the cost increases relate to agreements in the MOU, specifically in relation to comments made by Zeke Grader and Doug Lovell at the subcommittee's April 9th meeting. General discussion took place about the overall need for transparency regarding the Battle Creek project, especially since the costs have increased substantially. Several subcommittee members emphasized that decisions need to be made, but made with an eye toward process as well as the public policy and science involved.

Multi-Year Program Plan review and discussion

Dan began the presentation about the Multi-Year Program Plan and Year 4 Work Plan with an overview of the task and timeline. The Subcommittee was to develop a recommendation to take to the June 5 BDPAC meeting by the close of business on May 23. Ronda Lucas asked if the document could be considered a “living document” because she did not feel it was close to being a final document; Dan replied that the document does not need to be final until it goes to the Authority, most likely in mid-July. Handouts of Dan’s PowerPoint presentation were available at the meeting.

There was consensus among the Subcommittee members that the document, while informative, was not a work plan. Major points included the need for more specific detail; the need to be consistent in the messages delivered by ERP, ASET, and the Independent Science Board regarding conceptual models; the need to address stable, long-term funding; the need to identify program gaps; that the editorial focus was not ERP-centric enough; and the need to be more specific and better identify where ERP integrates with other CALFED programs as well as other programs that meet CALFED goals.

More specific comments included:

- Revise the Long-Term Schedule section regarding the Sacramento River to highlight elements similar to those listed under the Tuolumne River (Walt Hoyer)
- Provide a track changes version for the Subcommittee to review (Ronda Lucas)
- Given that hydrologic alteration is one of the most critical ecosystem needs but has not been adequately addressed in ERP implementation, identify adequate dedicated funding and support for instream flow programs (i.e., EWP) similar to how CALFED supported the EWA (Gary Bobker)
- Address the ROD commitment regarding establishing ERP user fees and how the Authority plans to develop appropriate user fees (Gary Bobker).
- Provide a broader perspective of the science element in regards to ERP goals for the Sacramento River and the North of Delta Offstream Storage project; and address how the desired outcomes for the Sacramento River will be developed and implemented; there is concern that neither CALFED nor DWR will complete the Sac River Flow Regime Tech Adv Group studies as part of the NODOS process, so it is important that ERP either directly or indirectly ensures that the necessary Sacramento River studies on restoration of instream, geomorphic and riparian functions be completed (Gary Bobker, Gary suggested that Dan meet with Steve Roberts to revise this information for the plan)
- Address how the level of Tier 1/2 ecosystem protection assumed in the ROD will be secured given how the (b2) decision by the courts changes the actual Tier 1 protection (Nick DiCroce)

- Present the content by Goal then break out into ROD commitments, cross-program linkages, action items, etc. (Bernice Sullivan)
- Need more detail about the future activities, needs to be more outcome driven, and need to include an action item that addresses the issue (Bernice Sullivan, Gary Bobker, Nick DiCroce)
- Under the Drinking Water Quality Program—ERP linkage, need to include money that DWQP has put into agricultural drainage cleanup which has benefits to ERP as well (Lisa Holm)
- Include Frank's Tract under the DWQP—ERP linkage as well because it is a drinking water program issue as well as a levee program issue (Lisa Holm)
- Add a section regarding the top five priority projects for the ERP in Year 4 (Lloyd Fryer)
- The report out to assist program managers in identifying gaps, such as monitoring programs that may be losing funding support (Serge Birk)
- Strengthen the documentation about the EWP and be more explicit about how you intend upon meeting the water acquisition goals set out in the ROD (Gary Bobker)
- Address the issue of ASIPs, why none have been completed, and what the strategy is regarding completing this task (Ronda Lucas)
- Update the ERP work plan to reflect the revised Working Landscapes work plan information (Ronda Lucas)
- Write about the consequences of delays and potential issues and develop strategy to address either the delays and issues or the consequences (Lisa Holm)
- Make sure that the land acquisition write up, particularly the acreages, is accurate (Ronda Lucas)
- Address the ecosystem benefits of land acquisitions and why ERP is acquiring land (Jennifer Martin, TNC; and Serge Birk)
- Address why only 300 acres out of several thousand identified has been acquired on the Sacramento River, and how does ERP plan on meeting the goal (related to SB1086 program) (Todd Manley)
- Identify what the ERP role is regarding the Comprehensive Study (page 35)
- The work plan ought to include more about goals and targets and how ERP is meeting those (Serge Birk)

At the suggestion of Gary Bobker, the Subcommittee deferred the writing of its recommendation to BDPAC to Gary, Ryan and Dan.

Next Steps for the Subcommittee

Subcommittee members will develop a list of cross-program integration areas of synergy and conflict and send via email using the Subcommittee reflector (erp_subcommittee@calwater.ca.gov) for discussion at the next meeting.

Subcommittee members also will review the revised draft of the Program Plan.

Next Meetings

The next meeting for the Ecosystem Restoration Subcommittee is 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Thursday, June 26. A second meeting was scheduled for 12-4 p.m. Thursday, August 21.